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CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 1 to 2 (canceled)

3. (previously amended) An encoder for producing an encoded packetised stream, comprising:

means for determining a minimum data rate to which the packetised stream could be repacketised for successful decoding by a decoder having a given first-in-first-out (FIFO) buffer size; and

means for introducing into the stream control data representing the minimum data rate.

4. (previously amended) An encoder as claimed in claim 3, wherein the encoded stream is losslessly compressed digital audio data.

Claims 5 to 15 (canceled)

16. (previously amended) A mastering system comprising the encoder as claimed in claim 3.

17. (original) A system comprising a mastering system as claimed in claim 16, and means for repacketising the data to form a stream having a peak data rate calculated in dependence upon the control data.

18. (original) A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the stream having a peak data rate corresponding to the control data comprises a fixed rate stream.

19. (original) A system for providing encoded data to a DVD comprising a mastering system as claimed in claim 16, and means for writing the control data onto the disc with the encoded data.

20. (previously amended) A system for providing encoded data to a DVD comprising a mastering system and an authoring system, the authoring system including an encoder as claimed in claim 3.

21. (currently amended) A system as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein the encoder comprises ~~an MLP~~ a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) lossless encoder for audio data.

Claims 22 to 24 (canceled)

25. (previously amended) A data processing method comprising:
producing a packetised encoded variable rate stream;
determining a minimum data rate to which the variable rate stream could be repacketised for successful decoding by a decoder having a given first-in-first-out (FIFO) buffer size; and
introducing control data into the encoded variable rate stream, the control data representing the minimum data.

Claim 26 to 28 (canceled)

29. (previously amended) The data processing method of claim 25, wherein the encoded variable rate stream comprises losslessly compressed digital audio data.

Claim 30 (canceled)

31. (previously amended) The data processing method of claim 25, further comprising processing the control data to determine an adequate bandwidth for transmission of the encoded variable rate stream, and transmitting the encoded variable rate stream over an interface having at least the adequate bandwidth.

32. (previously added) The data processing method of claim 31 wherein the interface operates at a fixed data rate.

33. (previously added) The data processing method of claim 31, wherein the interface is for communication between a DVD player and external equipment.

Claims 34 to 44 (canceled)

45. (currently amended) A device for decoding variable rate data ~~organised~~organized as a stream of packets, each packet including a corresponding decoder time stamp, the device comprising:

a feed buffer that receives the stream of packets to mitigate any interruption in the stream of packets;

a FIFO buffer having an input coupled to the feed buffer for receiving the stored data, and having an output; and

a decoder having an input coupled to the output of the FIFO buffer.

46. (previously added) The device of claim 45, wherein the feed buffer stores the stream until the corresponding decoder time stamp for each packet is identified.

47. (previously added) The device of claim 45, wherein the variable rate data comprises losslessly compressed digital audio data.

48. (currently amended) The device of claim 45, wherein the variable rate data comprises digital data that has been encoded by ~~an MLP~~a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) encoder.

49. (currently amended) The device of claim 45, wherein the decoder is ~~an MLP~~a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) decoder.

50. (previously amended) A decoder that decodes the encoded variable rate stream that includes said control data as provided by claim 25.